

INTIMATION

A. S. WATSON & CO.,

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WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANTS.

SCOTCH WHISKY.

WATSON'S

CELEBRATED

BLEND

VERY OLD LIQUEUR

SCOTCH WHISKY.

A blend of the finest WHISKIES distilled in SCOTLAND, of greatest quality, very fine and mellow.

Pronounced by Connoisseurs to be the BEST BLEND in the FAR EAST.

Per Dozen \$16.50

The following are also recommended, and are unsurpassed in quality:

A. THORNE'S BLEND \$12.00

R. GLENORCHY, MELLOW

BLEND, in fine "Scotch"

Whisky of great age 12.00

C. ABERLOUR, GLENLIVET 13.50

D. H. K. BLEND of the Finest

Old Malt Scotch Whiskies 16.00

THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY.

On the 15th May, at 8.30, North-South Street, Road, Shanghai, the wife of FRANK DEAN, of a son.

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many instances being an ardent desire to fall in for the remnant of her remaining assets when she shall have been compelled to declare her bankruptcy. This is, however, only the way of the world, and as China would herself have adopted it had affairs only turned the other way about, it cannot be said that she has much to grumble at.

China, however, is a land of possibilities, and so China's condition is a matter that concerns a good many more than her own Government and people; and as many of the European Powers are sincerely desirous of seeing China rehabilitated, it may be accepted that not all the advice with which China is treated springs from any half-concealed desire to become possessor of her remaining effects. The position then in China in many respects is not unlike that of India in 1858; China, as had then India, has a large indebtedness in gold, while she clings almost with desperation to a currency of silver. Owing to improvements in the metallurgical art, and the discovery of many new sources of supply, silver can be produced in enormous quantities, and at a rate which thirty years ago would have seemed chimerical. The consequence is that to meet her engagements China is compelled to withdraw from her circulation a continually increasing quantity of silver, so that the burden of her debt year by year presses more heavily on the assets of the Empire at large. Similar was the position in India ten years ago. A great deal has been said on the subject of bimetalism; it has been erected into a benevolent fetish on the one hand, and excoriated as a malignant demon on the other. As a fact bimetalism would be a magnificent thing, if it were only possible. The if here is the material point of the argument, and as long as it continues so to be bimetalism with all its "batteries" must stand to one side. It has been thrown in the teeth of the Indian Government that the measures it took in 1893 savoured of a "halfhearted bimetalism," as if that alone were sufficient to condemn them. We are content to accept the imputation and yet prepared to justify the Government in the measures it took to extricate itself and the country at large from the very difficult position in which they found the assets. Prior to the 26th June 1893, silver being the medium as well as actual currency in India, the mints of Calcutta and Bombay were open to the exchange of silver in unlimited quantities, the only check being the convenience of the holder of the bullion. "Standard" course, is the natural outcome of currency laws and conditions all over the world. The British Government accepts and coins all gold presented to it for the purpose, without question as to the quantity in circulation. On the 26th June ten years ago, the Indian Government announced that it would issue no more silver for coinage, and for the future would only issue rupees in return for gold, charging for each rupee 1s. 4d. at the rate of sixteen for a sovereign. The rupee was at the moment only worth 2s. 2d., so that immediately in many of the best friends of the Government raised the cry of "preposterous." The decision of the Government had been based upon it by the action of the exchange banks, who, like ALEXANDER, the Copper-Smith, saw in the proposed suppression of their trade. The wars and means for bringing about a change felt to be inevitable had been much discussed publicly, and the banks foreboding that something must be done, avowedly, as they thought, prepared to make money out of the difficulties of the Government, and imported enormous quantities of silver, which they sent to the mints for conversion into rupees as fast as the latter could turn them out. This circumstance, which really was the crux of the entire matter, is curiously not mentioned by Mr. ROBERTSON. The Government, not usually addicted to heroic measures, especially when finances were concerned, kept its own counsel for once, and skillfully avoided giving the banks any indication of the steps it intended to take. The notification of the immediate closure of the mints came thus upon the banks as a perfect surprise, as the silver they had intended to tender was left as a drug on their hands. This action of the Government was at the time much commented on and canvassed in an unfriendly spirit as amounting almost to sharp practice. Looking back on the position after an interval of ten years it is difficult to see what other course lay open. Had the Government gone beating about the bush, the banks would have found the means to render the conversion impossible. So strong and persistent were, however, these unfriendly strictures that in the end the Government had to make a compromise with the banks, and accept for coinage 20,000,000 rupees. This had not an important effect, and considerably delayed the relieving effect of the Government's action. As the subsequent history of the change of currency gains rather than loses in interest, we shall leave to a future occasion its discussion.

H.M.S. *Albatross*, *Phoenix*, and *Rosario* went out to Mies Bay yesterday morning.

The German mail of the 15th ult. was delivered in London on the 15th inst.

The Philippines Commission has passed an Act making May 30th, Memorial Day, a legal holiday in the islands.

Labuan has declared Hongkong to be an infected port, and quarantine regulations will be observed in the case of all vessels arriving there from this port.

The visitors to the City Hall Library and Museum for the week ending 17th May were 252 non-Chinese and 75 Chinese to the former, and 120 non-Chinese and 229 Chinese to the latter institution.

Diamonds valued at 2,000 pesos were stolen from an image of the Virgin Mary at the cigar factory of Cecilio Lopez, Manila, last week. The Police and Secret Service men arrested the thief, within a few hours, and all the stolen jewels were recovered.

The Rev. W. Gell (successor of the famous evangelist, Dwight L. Moody) is at Singapore. He is making a four years' tour of the world for the purpose of making a thorough, comprehensive study of missions with a view to publishing in book form the product of his researches.

Police Inspector Langley charged a Chinese coolie at the Magistracy yesterday with "picking over" rubbish taken from a house where a case of plague had occurred. Mr. F. A. Hazland found the charge proved and sentenced the defendant to 14 days' hard labour without deception of a fine.

In the course of the Queen's Road case at the Criminal Sessions yesterday the floor of the Court was strewed with exhibits comprising burnt wood, boxes, rags, clothing, bottles and tins. The disorder of the scene was given a finishing touch by the presence of two mice, which disappeared themselves unaccountably amongst the debris.

The heavy rain showers of yesterday found an entrance into the Supreme Court by the side windows, causing those people who sat under them to cough and sneeze. During the prevalence of one of the showers the jury had to leave the jury-box and seek refuge from the shower-bath by taking a seat in the centre of the Court.

Commencing today a troupe of Japanese acrobats and jugglers will give a performance every afternoon and evening for the next two weeks at the Theatre Royal on the Central Market. A Japanese show of a similar kind put the Colony at a disadvantage two years ago, and the entertainment they presented was a real eye-opener.

We are requested to state that the Kwangsi Exhibition Fund Committee will meet Mr. Clement at 5 p.m. to-morrow in the Chamber of Commerce Room, City Hall, when it will make a statement concerning what has been in the course of his tour through the Chinese, stricken districts of Kwangsi province. The public are invited to attend.

Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan is, according to the Japan papers, to visit the Far East. It is to leave Vancouver early next month, and travel through Alaska and Kamchatka, to be known as the Eastern Asiatic Railway, and it is in connection with this project that the tour is to be taken.

The Alva Company which will occupy the Theatre Royal on Saturday and for four or five days next week arrived here yesterday. Judging from the notices in Indian newspapers the Company presents a first-class entertainment of the Masque-and-Cook order and doubtless they will enjoy in Hongkong a season as successful as they have had elsewhere. Particulars of the performance are given to-day in our advertisement columns.

A Tokyo telegram to the *N. C. Daily News* says:—A question has been submitted to the Lower House suggesting the necessity of peacefully inducing Russia to recognize the validity of Japan's Korean status conferred by the Anglo-Japanese Agreement, and querying whether Japan's present procedure in regard to the Manchurian question is calculated to promote close relations with Russia. This emanates from the pro-Russian party, which is small but active.

At the Magistracy yesterday, three Indian watchmen at Quarry Bay shipbuilding yard were charged on the complaint of Mr. J. Lacock, head watchman, with being drunk and disorderly in the shipyard at 11 p.m. on Sunday. They were convicted of the charge, and in fineing them \$25 each. Mr. F. A. Hazland remarked that it was just such conduct as the defendants had been guilty of that led to serious disturbances. Under the circumstances, therefore, he felt bound to make an example of them.

Of plague, 23 cases were notified during the two days ended at noon on Saturday. One case was European (Lupator Macdonald, who continues to progress favourably), one Portuguese, one Indian (from Victoria Gao), and the remainder, 17 of whom were fatal, were Chinese. No less than ten bodies were "found." Since 1st January this year there have now been 678 known cases of plague. The only other cases of communicable disease occurring during the week ended 16th ult. were one of diphtheria (European) and one of smallpox (Chinese). Neither proved fatal.

The death is announced from Wahu of Captain Peterson, a pilot. The *N. C. Daily News* says the death occurred under tragic circumstances.

A New York telegram in the *Manila Cable* says the U.S. cruisers *Cincinnati*, *Albatross* and *Raleigh* have been ordered to join the Asiatic Squadron.

The Rangoon Port Commissioners have appointed Mr. Holmes, Chief Engineer of the Singapore Docks, to be Resident Engineer of the Rangoon Port Trust.

At Shanghai last week Edward Gray, chief carpenter's mate of the U.S.S. *Monadnock*, accidentally shot himself, and died in an ambulance on the way to the hospital.

THE LATE PETTY OFFICER GROUNDS.

The Navy League intends erecting a memorial tablet to the memory of the late Petty Officer Walter Grounds of H.M.S. *Terrible*, who died on this station last year from cholera. It was Grounds who made the record shooting in 1901 during the ship's commission in the Far East, hitting the target eight times within a minute. The tablet, which is to be of bronze, is to be placed on the wall of St. John's Church, Ladywood, Birmingham. It will shortly be ready for unveiling, and the ceremony will be more or less of a public character.

SIBERIAN RAILWAY PROJECTS.

The Russian railway authorities are turning their attention to projects for constructing a series of "feeding" lines to run northwards from the Siberian Railway down to the frontiers of China. Thus, this second period of railway construction in Siberia is about to be entered upon very much sooner than was proposed originally, for early in the spring the surveys for the first of these branch lines will be made. The Russian Government intends to build a railway from the station of Palomoshnya to the town of Barnaul, an important mining and smelting centre on the Ob, in Western Siberia, and 220 miles S.W. of Tomsk. The line from Barnaul will be of great commercial importance, and it will run from that place to Bishik, and along the course of the Katuna, up to the Chinese frontier, whence it can be extended, by way of Khabarovsk and Ussuriysk, into the interior of China, and ultimately have its terminus in Peking. It is said that this railway will not be carried out with undue haste, and that, in fact, ten years will be occupied in carrying out the scheme. Still, a start will be made this year in constructing the Barnaul Railway and its branch line to Tshikend, and its eastern branch line to the Chinese frontier.

THE PHILIPPINES CURRENCY.

The following telegram appears in the *Manila Cable*:

New York, 18th May. It is announced by the Bureau of Insular Affairs that there is to be no Philippine gold standard until the party is established. This is generally interpreted to mean that the Philippine peso will not be redeemable in gold so long as the Mexican peso continues to be redeemable at varying rates of exchange. It is pointed out by those who have discussed this phase of the matter that if any other course were pursued it would allow undesirable speculation. By the terms of the Act the new peso is to be receivable in circulation when five millions shall have been coined and ready for circulation, and shall be given a preference in the public offices of the government for all public dues. It is also provided that the present silver coins shall continue in circulation until not earlier than January 1, 1904. Until the Mexican currency is retired or such time as the legal parity is reached, it is understood from the ruling at Washington the gold standard will not go into effect.

THE STRANDED "VICTORIA."

NAVAL ENQUIRY AT CHEDDAR.

The British Consul summoned a Naval Court to assemble at the Consulate on the 4th inst., to enquire into the wreck of this vessel and into the conduct of the master and crew. The Court consisted of the Consul, as President, assisted by three B. & S. captains, Messrs. Robinson, Stott, and Somerville.

The principal witnesses examined were the master and chief mate, whose certificates were handed into the custody of the Court, pending the hearing. The evidence of these two gentlemen was strongly corroborative, and showed, briefly, that the vessel was properly manned, supplied with charts, and all necessary gear, and was navigated as skillfully as their experience and judgment suggested. In cross-examination they both admitted that they had never been in the Gulf of Pechili before; that they were going at a considerable speed through a thick fog; and that they did not cast the lead very frequently. On the other hand it seemed clear that the stranding was purely accidental, and that all hands worked strenuously to do their best to get the vessel off afterwards.

After hearing the evidence the Court retired to consider their judgment, and at a quarter-past six it was announced by the Consul in presence of the parties interested. The Court found that the master was deserving of censure on the points above-mentioned, which were termed errors of judgment, but did not think it necessary to deal with his certificate. They fined the master \$30, 0d. the costs of the enquiry, and thereafter returned their certificates to the master and mate.

The master thanked the Court for having given him a very fair hearing.

TELEGRAMS.

REUTER'S SERVICE.

THE DUTY ON TEA.

LONDON, 15th May.

An influential deputation will wait on Mr. Balfour and Mr. Ritchie to urge the remission of a portion of the duty on tea instead of the abolition of the corn duty.

LATER.

Mr. Balfour has declined to mollify the duty on tea.

THE STRIKE IN MELBOURNE.

LONDON, 15th April.

The strike in Melbourne is ended.

THE NEAR EAST.

LONDON, 15th May.

The Bulgarian Government has sent a note to its representatives abroad requesting them to call the attention of the Powers to the excesses of the Turks in Macedonia, which render useless the efforts made by Bulgaria to restrain the Macedonians.

RUSSIA.

LONDON, 15th May.

There is a marked recrudescence of anti-semitism in Russia, where the old expulsion ordinances are being enforced. Thirty-seven thousand Jews have been forced to quit Kiof, and a reign of terror exists.

THE EDUCATION BILL.

LONDON, 16th May.

A compromise has been effected in the Education Bill, and the Government has agreed to an arrangement reducing the number of Borough Councillors and giving the County Council an absolute majority.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN ON FREEDOM.

LONDON, 16th May.

Mr. Chamberlain, speaking at Birmingham, said that he strongly condemned the interpretation of Free Trade, which prevented Britain from favouring her colonies or from retaliating against countries penalising the colonies for favouring Britain; the country ought not to be bound by any technical definition of Free Trade so far as fellow-subjects were concerned. We should not hesitate to retaliate whenever the interests between the colonists and ourselves were threatened by others.

LATER.

Mr. Chamberlain's speech is regarded as marking an epoch in the fiscal relations of the Mother Country and the Colonies and as raising the issue whether a wide-world free trade accords with the country's best interests.

MOROCCO.

LONDON, 16th May.

The Moorish troops sent to Tetuan in an English steamer have entered the town unopposed; the rebels are demoralised by heavy losses and the garrison now assumes the offensive.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHINESE THEATRES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

Hongkong, 18th May.

Sir,—Will "Common Sense" answer the following questions:—

1. Is he financially interested in the keeping open of these theatres?
2. Do the better class of Chinese keep their children away from school during the plague season?
3. Did he require a B & S. after digesting "Scallywag's" letters?
4. Would he inform us of the true reason why the Chinese make for Canton or elsewhere when they become sick?

—Yours, etc.,

JOEY.

BRITISH LESSONS FROM AMERICA.

END OF THE MORELY COMMISSION.

The report of the Commission of British workmen, which was taken to the United States by Mr. Alfred Mosely, C.M.G., a few months ago, to study American industrialism, was published on the 17th ult.

The Commissioners find that—

1. The employers in the United States offer their workmen inducements to extra effort.
2. That while in England employers regard the use of machinery as entitling them to reduce wages, the contrary view prevails in the United States.
3. That the extreme specialisation of work in America is a great drawback, causing, as it does, excessive strain and shortening of the lives of the workmen, whose hours are slightly longer than those of British workmen.
4. That Great Britain is in advance of America in the matter of technical education.
5. That the American workman is more energetic, more sober, and less addicted to sport than the British workman.

A DAY AT THE MAGISTRACY.

At home the Police Court is in many places a popular rendezvous, and the people who gather within its precincts as interested disinterested spectators seem to derive as much enjoyment if not always instruction, from the proceedings as a party of school children from the magic-lantern entertainment. Out here the case is different—so far, at least, as concerns Europeans, for whom, even though time permitted, the scanty accumulation of the stuffy little Police Court has no attraction whatever inducements otherwise might offer. The Chinese, however, of the class that frequent the Court daily—when the weather is nice—not mind crowding and its attendant discomforts, and although their room doubtless would be preferable to their company, the Police Court unless when circumstances impel the magistrates to decree otherwise, is open to the public, at so long as quietness and order are observed spectators are permitted to attend.

The amount of judicial business transacted at the Magistracy in a single day is surprising, and when one considers the many different languages that usually have to be interpreted into plain, every-day English, surprises give place to wonder. The Scotch tongue is as generally regarded by Britishers as a foreign one—although its dialectical peculiarities are often a dilutant of comprehension by people beyond the Tweed—but at least one case is heard at the Magistracy where the services of an interpreter were necessary to render intelligible the evidence of a "pau, pau Heelan man" not long arrived in the Colony and still bearing traces of his native rusticity. "Where did you find this opium?" he was asked, among other questions, in reference to the matter on hand. "In a neuk, yer Worshipp among a pickle oreel." Repeated questioning could not vary the answer, which had at last to be explained to the magistrate by a Scotch inspector of police as meaning "in a case amongst some odds and ends." Evidently afterwards by his superior officer for a bad choice of words, the policeman, apologetically, explained the magistrate's inability to understand him, rejoined, "Pair-erent, did he want to do deliver a sermon?" This recalls to mind an incident that happened—or is said to have happened, which is much the same thing in the long run—in the Police Court of a small seaport town in Scotland. A French sailor had been taken into custody for fighting with a woman, the bailiff, "Weel, manna, what he ye sayin' to the phairge o' foelthin' at the harbor?" The Frenchman made a gesture expressive of his inability to understand the interrogation. The Court made another attempt, and adopted the common-sense expedient of endeavoring to convey a meaning to a foreigner by talking in broken English to him. "Monsieur, what have ye to say to this charge? Surely ye canna miss comprehendin' that?" "Interpreter," said the prisoner. "An' ye need say, 'no,' plyingly replied the bailiff. "I canna mak' out the half ye say, an' I'm sure if ye ken yer own—ye pair, silly, jubbet crutic. An' ye go, an' be sure ye keep the peace, fill yer ship leaves, when ye can eat tither's throats for nae. But dinna kick up your mair stumshies in our quate town."

We have already referred to the multiplicity of languages encountered in a day's work at the Magistracy. There may be appearing nations from all four corners of the globe (if corners can exist on a sphere, but the business of the Court never ceases to be a standstill—it doesn't even halt as the porter told the old lady who enquired with surprise if the express train that had just dashed through the station didn't stop there. In they come, people from the East from the West, from the North, and from the South, but interpreters are found for everyone or then and there resolves itself into Sunday-school order. On the staff at the Magistracy there is a polyglot who handles about half-a-dozen dialects and languages with as much facility as he his English, his native tongue.

In reports of Police Court proceedings it is home the word "laughter" is often interpolated, but here it is rarely the case that any thing beyond a smile greets a licensing incident in the daily routine. This is not due to any lack of appreciation, but it is remembered, as does it indicate that the proverbial inability of the Scot to see a joke extingui the magistrate. For one thing, the dignity of the Court is never lost sight of, and no encouragement is given to levity; and for another, these incidents have

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